Decline in Small Savings

318. DR. RATNAKAR PANDEY: SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that small savings declined by 25—69 per cent in 1986-87 compared to the preceding year;

(b) if so, what are the comparative small savings figures for the two years and the likely corresponding figures for the current year; and

(c) what are the reasons for the decline?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) to (c) The pattern of investment by Non-Government Employees Provident Funds was revised from 1-4-1986, as per which these funds could not invest in Post Office Time Deposits. Excluding the net collections in Post Office Time Deposits for comparison, the net collections under small savings were as under:

1985-86	Rs. 3243 crores
1986-87	Rs. 3822 crores (*Provisional*)

It is estimated to collect Rs. 4200 crores during the current year, excluding Post Office Time Deposits.

Call given by Four Sikh High Priests

319. SHRI KALPNATH RAI: PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the four High Priests from the Golden Temple at Amritsar gave a call recently to the Sikhs to back up militants; and

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) Three priests who were indulging in such activities have been detained under the National Security Act.

Income-Tax Payers in the Country

320. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what was the number of income-tax payers in the country in the years 1985, 1986 and so far in 1987; and

(b) what steps Government are taking to bring into the income-tax net more persons who are apparently engaged in petty business but are having substantial incomes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI B. K. GADHVI): (a) The position regarding number of income-tax payers in the country is as under:—

As on	No. of income-tax payers
31-3-1985 . .	49·35 lacs
31-3-1986 . .	54·86 lacs
31-3-1987 . .	62·61 lacs

(b) Survey operations have been intensified to bring persons having taxable income, into the tax net. Besides, various publicity campaigns have also helped in new assessees filing return voluntarily.

Communal Riots in West Bengal

321. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of communal riots that took place in West Bengal during the last two months; and

(b) the causes thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) There was no case of major communal riot in the State of West Bengal during the last two months. However, as per available information, there were 7 incidents of communal violence in the State on account of disputes over routes of religious processions; misbehaviour; descreation of religious objects; and miscellaneous petty issues.

Non-adoption of Pollution control measures by Distillery Industry

322. SHRI KAPIL VERMA:
SHRI SOHAN LAL DHUSIYA:
SHRI RAM CHANDRA VIKAL:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what steps are being taken by the Central Government to ensure that the distillery industry takes adequate pollution control measures; and

(b) the number of industrial and other concerns against which action has been taken by the Central and State Governments under the penal provisions of the Environment Protection Act during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) The effluent standards for distillery industries have been finalised.

Distilleries are required to instal necessary treatment plant within a time frame as specified by the concerned State Pollution Control Boards for individual units.

(b) The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 came into effect on 19-11-1986. So far notices under Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act have been issued to 63 polluting units.

Forest cover in the Country

323. SHRI KAPIL VERMA:
SHRI SOHAN LAL DHUSIYA:
SHRI RAM CHANDRA VIKAL:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what has been the total forest cover in the country during the last three years, year-wise, and what has been the pace of deforestation during this period;

(b) what is the total forest area in Andaman and Nicobar Islands and the extent of encroachment that has taken place there during the last three years;

(c) whether Government propose to allow more forest area for plantation and industries; and

(d) what measures are being taken by the Central Government to prevent further deforestation in the Islands?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) Extent of the forest cover, as well as the pace of deforestation, has not been assessed for the last three years. However, the Forest Survey of India is currently engaged in continuous monitoring of the forest cover in the country on a two-year cycle.

(b) The total forest area in the A. & N. Islands in 7171 Sq. Kms.

The extent of encroachment detected during the last three years has been 475 hectares.

(c) No Sir.